

ACCESSIBILITY OF VISUALS IN THE MUSIC  
CLASSROOM FOCUSING ON STUDENTS WITH  
DISABILITIES, STUDENTS IN POVERTY, AND  
CULTURALLY DIVERSE STUDENTS

Katherine A. Holbrook

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AND CULTURALLY DIVERSE STUDENTS

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KATHERINE A. HOLBROOK

## ABSTRACT

This research focuses on visual aid accessibility for students with disabilities, students from poverty, and culturally diverse students. Each of these factors are explored, defined, and reflected on in regard to how visual aids could be more accessible for each community of students. Posters have been developed based on this research to practically apply the findings to visuals that could be used in a music classroom.

When considering the accessibility for students with disabilities, it is crucial to review legislation such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1990, 2004, 2013) which mandates services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. This research specifically focused on cognitive disabilities, language disorders, autism spectrum disorders, and vision loss, or those that would be hindering when using visual aids.

Another community of students that are discussed in this research is the students in poverty. Classroom structure may be one of the largest influences on any student's learning abilities, which includes visual aids. There are many types of poverty that are to be acknowledged in any classroom environment, and some students may even be considered in multiple subcategories of poverty. These include situational, generational, absolute, relative, urban, and rural poverty. Visual aids help students in poverty with availability of instructional resources, dedication to diversity and equity, and emphasis on reading skills.

Cultural diversity is an additional factor of differentiation when defining a community of students and their accessibility in the classroom. Culture is currently viewed as shared patterns of behavior and interaction, as well as cognitive constructs and understanding learned through socialization (Pratt, 2016). It is crucial that a culture not be essentialized (making

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Cultural diversity is an additional factor of differentiation when defining a community of students and their accessibility in the classroom. Culture is currently viewed as shared patterns of behavior and interaction, as well as cognitive constructs and understanding learned through socialization (Pratt, 2016). It is crucial that a culture not be essentialized (making



generalizations about a culture that would blur their unique distinctions) in the representation of that culture. Cultures can be explored through songs, choral works, instrumental selections, and listening experiences while making musical connections to a culture's art, dance, literature, drama, and social studies.

Practical applications of creating visual aids that are more accessible are then discussed. Each group of students have specific accommodations that are needed to promote accessibility to the learning environment, including visual aids.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks to my thesis director and mentor, Dr. Michelle Foltz, for encouraging me through this process and guiding me down the path that led to this thesis. It has been a long time coming, but this completed thesis has become a passion project for myself because of her investment.

Thank you to the music educators of Muskegon County School District, for mentoring me through my undergraduate degree and welcoming me into your classrooms. I am thrilled to continue these connections as I become a colleague next school year.

Finally, thanks to the supportive faculty members of the Scripps School of Music at Columbus State University who have supported and guided me. I am beyond fortunate to have such successful mentors to follow that are so passionate about their craft.



## DEDICATION

To my mother, Kenli Holbrook, for showing me what it means to

teach with compassion and to foster lifelong learning

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## Introduction

For most individuals, visual stimulation is constantly occurring. From the moment we wake up, we take in a world of information primarily through our visual senses as well as other senses such as auditory and kinesthetic. Children retain so much simply from visual stimulation. Many educators deem it important that knowledge taught at school is accessible to all students. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) ensures services to children with disabilities in their education (2004). To comply with this law, all teachers should strive to make their classroom accessible for all students, including music educators. If children retain information well from visual stimuli, the quality of the visuals in a classroom should be considered, including how accessible they may be for all students. Accessibility of visuals in the music classroom for students with disabilities, students in poverty, and culturally diverse students will be explored in this thesis. The practical application of the research has been considered and visual aids have been developed to reflect the necessary accessibility.

## Students with Disabilities

Music teachers strive every day to make their classrooms accessible for everyone, particularly students with disabilities. Adamek (2010) structured her book *Music in Special Education*, by types of disabilities and this section will be similarly structured, but will only address cognitive disorders, language disorders, autism spectrum disorders, and vision loss, as they relate to the accessibility of visual aids and posters in the music classroom. To understand education in the life of a student with disabilities, it may be resourceful first to understand the laws in place that ensure educational services be provided.



Most students with disabilities are in inclusive classroom settings as mandated by IDEA (1990, 2004, 2013). According to Ayers, Quinn, and Stovall (2009) and Thomas and Loxley (2007), inclusion is “based on issues of social justice, equity, tolerance, pluralism, and individual rights.” Four basic philosophical ideas guide inclusion-based practices: 1) the belief that all people desire to develop in some capacity; 2) the belief that the student is a whole person and to provide an integrated approach for that student’s education through collaboration with others; 3) the belief that these students should have experiences as close to normal as possible; and 4) the promotion of empowerment and decision-making of students and their families regarding services (Kochhar, West, & Taymans, 2000).

It is also important to establish the differences between mainstreaming and inclusion. Mainstreaming means the students are only in the general education classrooms for part of the school day. Mainstream students spend are only in the general education classrooms for part of the school day. Mainstream students spend a large portion of the school day in a designated classroom and only attend one or two general educational classes. Alternatively, inclusion students attend general education classes for most of the day, and sometimes receive one-on-one instruction based on their academic needs (Adamek, 2010).

Inclusion was mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1990, 2004). According to the United States Department of Education (2017), IDEA (2004) was a law that mandated services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. Within this legislation, students with disabilities receive input from parents and teachers regarding their educational goals. Individualized Education Plan, or IEP, contains a statement of the student’s present level of performance (PLOP), annual educational goals, and the support and services provided by the school, such as paraprofessional assistance. The IEP team is comprised of the parent, at least



one general education teacher, at least one special education teacher, a school district representative, a school psychologist, and the child if at the age of 16 or older.

Section 504 mandates accommodations to attain the goals of the IEP. The "Section 504" name comes from the law section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. A Section 504 Plan consists of specific accommodations, supports, or services to aid the academic success of the student with disabilities. The team that develops a Section 504 Plan can include the general education teachers, the special education teacher, the principal, the parent, and possibly the student, based on maturity and age (Stanberry, 2017).

As previously stated, for the purpose of this thesis, the focus on students with disabilities is limited to students with cognitive disabilities, language disorders, autism spectrum disorders, and vision loss. This decision was based on the specific disabilities that may hinder learning with visual aids. However, other disabilities should be considered when developing a learning environment and teaching style as a whole.

Cognitive disabilities can take many forms such as 1) intellectual disability, 2) learning disability, or 3) traumatic brain injury. Intellectual disability, formerly known as mental retardation, can be caused by genetic factors, environmental factors, or brain factors. Students with cognitive disabilities can have difficulty with cognitive skills and adaptive skills. Children with these disabilities can be more likely to have multiple disabilities. Students with learning disabilities can have neurologically based processing problems with processing information in terms of input, memory, integration, and output. Issues with reading, writing, math, or general memory are typical complications for students with cognitive disabilities. Additionally, students may have difficulty with attention, socialization, or frustration tolerance. Traumatic brain injuries can affect all areas of functioning for a student including social/emotional, cognitive,



physical/motor, and communication (Adamek, 2010). The effect of the injury that happened to the student is dependent of the nature, severity, and location of the injury. Music teachers of students with intellectual disabilities may consider providing additional support in order for the student to find success in the music classroom, such as communicating with the general education and special education teachers and the parents to determine participation goals in the music classroom (Adamek, 2010).

Language disorders can be caused by other afflictions such as cerebral palsy, mental retardation/intellectual disability, autism, brain injury, or hearing impairment. This complication with language can be developed before, during, or after the development of typical language skills. Language delay should not be confused with language disorder. Language delay is when the student develops typical language competencies but at a slower rate than expected, while language disorder is when the student displays language skills and behavior that are not typical of normally developed language skills. The student's difficulties may be related to content (semantics), form (phonology, syntax, and morphology), or functional use (pragmatics).

Children on the autism spectrum should also be considered when assessing the accessibility of visuals in the music classroom. Autism and autism spectrum disorders (ASD) are highly present in American schools; one in one hundred individuals have either autism or autism spectrum disorders (Adamek, 2010). The autism spectrum is based on six different qualitative criteria: 1) measured intelligence (severely impaired to gifted), 2) social interaction (aloof to passive to active yet unconventional), 3) communication (nonverbal to verbal), behaviors (intense to mild), sensory (hyposensitive to hypersensitive), and motor (uncoordinated to coordinated). Students with Asperger's syndrome, a syndrome on the spectrum, are highly functional, for example; they experience challenges in social behavior, but have little to no



language deficits or intellectual deficits that are typical of autism. Students with autism or autism spectrum disorders may have alternative communication systems such as pointing to images, signing, or using computer devices. The teacher might consider pairing visual cues with verbal cues. Additionally, a predictable environment, alternative goals and activities, and positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior may be beneficial for students on the autism spectrum.

The IDEA (2004) defines vision loss as an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. Vision loss can be either congenital (from birth), or adventitious (caused by trauma or other conditions). Three types of vision loss are astigmatism, hyperopia (farsightedness), and myopia (nearsightedness). Eye conditions that could lead to those types of vision loss include albinism, amblyopia, cataracts, glaucoma, nystagmus, optic nerve atrophy, optic nerve hypoplasia, retinitis pigmentosa, retinoblastoma, retinopathy of prematurity, strabismus, and cortical visual impairment. Students with vision loss may not be able to observe or imitate others, therefore possibly hindering their learning capability. This condition can impact students' orientation and mobility, daily living skills, reading and writing, conceptualization and cognitive development, and vocational choices. Students that experience vision loss may also not have the benefit of learning from visual illustrations. They may need direct, one-on-one instruction and hands-on experiences. Teachers may consider that music and materials for these students could be printed in large print or even in Braille. Students with disabilities are not the only community of students who need to be considered when assessing accessibility; consideration should also be given to students in poverty.



## According to Miranda (1991) **Students in Poverty** (Miranda, 1991, p. 10)

Students in poverty should also be considered when discussing accessibility for the music classroom. Class structure may be one of the largest influences on the students in our classroom. For the purpose of this paper, I will focus on how poverty can influence the learning environment and how posters can aid in accessibility for such students.

In *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*, Payne (1996) presented a chart of the hidden rules among classes. The chart explores how each class views common principles in most societies. According to Payne (1996), poverty can be loosely defined as the extent to which an individual does without resources in the following aspects: financial, emotional, Mental, physical, spiritual, support systems, relationships/role models, and knowledge of hidden rules. Individuals in poverty might view the people they cherish as their possessions. They may tend to highly value a sense of humor, and the subject of their humor could potentially be viewed as crude or taboo. Social emphasis is focused on the inclusion of those who the individual favors. Quantity of food is valued over quality or presentation. Clothing may be one of the few ways that individuals in poverty find an outlet for expression of personality. People in poverty tend to make decisions in the moment based on feeling or need for survival. Education may be viewed by these individuals as having great value, but not always an achievable reality. Poverty can alter a person's beliefs on fate to where he or she does not believe in having the power to change the path of the future. Language may play a large role in survival. In families experiencing poverty, the structure is typically matriarchal. The individuals in poverty can have a typical local view of the definition of the world. The biggest difference across the class structures is how each group views the world. Like other classes, love for these individuals is conditional. The driving for those in poverty can be survival, relationships, and entertainment.



According to Miranda (1991), regardless of race or ethnicity, poor children are much more likely than affluent children to suffer developmental delay and damage, to drop out of high school, and to experience teen pregnancy. Additionally, poor inner-city adolescents are seven times more likely to be the victims of child abuse or neglect than children of high social and economic status (Renchler, 1993). According to Payne (1996), the United States' child poverty rate is substantially higher - often two to three times higher - than that of most other major Western industrialized nations.

Jenson (2009) noted that poverty is relative. That is, if everyone around the individual is also in poverty, the distinguishing qualities between poverty and wealth become more vague. Poverty occurs in all races and in all countries. Economic class structures are expressed more precisely on a continuum model, rather than a clear-cut distinction.

There are six types of poverty: situational, generational, absolute, relative, urban, and rural (Jensen 2009). These, of course, can combine to form each specific situation. Situational poverty is caused by a sudden crisis or loss and is often temporary. Generational poverty lasts for a longer period of time because it occurs in families where at least two generations have been born into poverty. Poverty that involves a scarcity of such necessities as shelter, running water, and food is known as absolute poverty, which is rare in the United States. In contrast, relative poverty is when the economic status of a family is insufficient in meeting the societal average standard of living. Urban poverty deals with a complex aggregate of chronic and acute stressors (crowding, violence, noise, etc.) and is dependent on often-inadequate large-city services. However, those in rural poverty have few job opportunities available and often less access to services, support for disabilities, and quality educational opportunities. To move out of most of these types of poverty, the individual needs education and relationships.



In his book *Teaching with Poverty in Mind*, Jensen (2009) makes three claims about the effect of poverty on education. The first of his claims is that chronic exposure to poverty causes the brain to physically change in a detrimental manner. This unfortunate claim means that students are influenced by their home life, which can affect their learning experiences. Secondly, because the brain is designed to adapt from experience, it can also change for the better. In other words, poor children can experience emotional, social, and academic success, despite their surroundings. Finally, Jensen (2009) claimed that although many factors affect academic success, many are particularly effective in promoting the success of students in poverty.

Children in poverty can be afflicted in many ways. Their families are afflicted with social and emotional challenges, acute and chronic stressors, cognitive lags, and health and safety issues. There are also factors that could affect intelligence quotient (IQ) such as home environment and living conditions, early childhood experiences and early educational intervention, quality of nutrition, and amount and duration of schooling (Jensen 2009). Actions that schools could take to assist these students could include early intervention and additional supplementation from their schools. There also may be opportunity for students on free or reduced lunch plans to receive more nutrition to take home through volunteer and nonprofit programs.

Jensen also lists the characteristics of successful schools that have been labeled as high poverty schools. Not every school may have these characteristics, but may have a combination of the following (Jensen, 2009). Characteristics in bold font indicate those that relate most to visuals in the classroom.



- Academic press for achievement
- **Availability of instructional resources**
- Belief that all students can succeed at high levels
- Caring staff and faculty
- Clear curriculum choices
- Coherent, standards-based curriculum
- Collaborative decision making
- Collaborative scoring of student work
- **Dedication to diversity and equity**
- **Emphasis on reading skills**
- High expectations
- Ongoing data collection and formative assessments
- Orderly climate
- Regular assessment of student progress combined with feedback and remediation
- Regular teacher-parent communication
- Shared mission and goals
- Strategic assessment of staff
- Strong focus on student achievement
- Structure (including student goals and classroom management)
- Support for teacher influence (teacher aides, paraprofessionals)
- Unequivocal focus on academic achievement and instruction
- Use of assessment of data to improve student achievement and instruction

Visual aids may be able to help in the encouragement of some of these characteristics, such as dedication to diversity and equity, emphasis on and availability of instructional resources.

Jensen (2009) suggested that some tactics may not work in schools that are high poverty schools. Focusing on rote learning memorization, or what some educators may call *drill and kill*, is not necessarily effective for students in poverty (Jensen, 2009). A show of force and heightened security measures may not encourage learning or risk taking and may have a negative



effect on the student's education. Eliminating time for the arts and physical education would probably be detrimental to students in poverty, because all student should have opportunity to become well rounded (Jensen, 2009).

Finally, Jensen (2009) noted *achievement killers*, or mistakes that cause schools in poverty to fail. There errors are avoidable, even by schools that are labeled as high poverty. The first mistake is overdoing the "pep talks" and the "hot air". Showing action and results is more likely going to get a positive response than words alone or lack of actual implementation. The next mistake is putting the students first and the staff last. According to Jensen (2009), schools should take care of their teachers so that they can take care of their students. Having organizations like Parent-Teacher Association/Organization would help build the camaraderie of a school environment, possibly motivating the teachers more. Similarly, treating the symptoms of failure and not the causes may only take an educational institution so far. Creating a climate of fear is another common mistake. Jensen (2009) posited children naturally do not respond well to fear, and this could hurt the quality of their education. Lastly, high-performing schools do not make the mistake of counting on big wins quickly. They may understand that student development is not instantaneous and takes time, effort, and resources on the student's part as well as the educator's. Students of various cultural backgrounds should also be considered when discussing accessibility of visual aids.

### **Students from Various Cultures**

In today's society, many cultures can be represented in a single classroom. Music teachers may encounter students from various cultures on a daily basis, and may consider incorporating elements of those cultures in their classrooms. When making these considerations,



the teacher would be answering three questions: what makes or defines a culture? What does culture look like in a classroom? What does culture look like in a music classroom? The answer to these questions is fluid. Educational institutions have begun to pioneer new and more inclusive fronts.

Defining culture has been a complicated task for many years. Prior to 1957, culture was defined as patterns of behavior, actions, and customs (Pratt, 2016). At the end of the twentieth century, knowledge, meanings, and symbols were what shaped ideas of cultural specificity. Recently, culture is more popularly viewed as shared patterns of behavior and interaction, and cognitive constructs and understanding. Learned through socialization, such patterns have contributed to the identity of the group as well as the individual. In *The Interpretations of Cultures*, Geertz (1973) noted “man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs.” One could interpret this statement as a description of the complicated intricacies that make up each unique culture in our overall global society.

A large issue with defining culture is essentializing the characteristics of a culture. When we begin to essentialize a culture, we may blur the distinctions of the individual to generalize the group’s characteristics. This could lower the authenticity of a culture’s impressions on the general population. Essentialization could be lessened by realizing that culture is neither monolithic nor uniformly performing (Pratt, 2016).

Once a culture can be clearly and properly defined, the idea of culture can be introduced and explored in the classroom setting. This can be achieved through multicultural education. Banks (1994) viewed multicultural education as “the organizing of educational experiences for students that develop sensitivity, understanding, and respect for peoples from a broad spectrum of ethnic-cultural backgrounds.” While the United States of America has always been a



culturally diverse country, the educational institutions within have not. One of the major forces behind the culturalization of the education was the Civil Rights movement in America in the 1960s (Herring, 2015). Prior, education was available only to a privileged selection of society, but it was not the civil right of the individual. This changed with the reversal of *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) by *Brown v. Board of Education Topeka* (1954) (Domwachukwu, 2010).

Banks (2010) explored the concept of five phases of the emergence of multicultural education. The first phase demanded ethnic groups to teach mono-ethnic courses, or courses that focus on a specific culture. This allowed for students to experience a focused study of the culture. The second phase dealt with the inclusion of multiethnic courses that focus on multiple groups and worldviews. This phase encouraged the promotion of the globalization and crossover cultures with one another. The next phase addressed the inequalities students may be experiencing in the school system. The fourth phase was the endorsement of a multicultural education that educated students on multiple ethnicities and also fights the inequalities ingrained in educational institutions. The final phase focused on the ongoing process of taking social action in the schools against inequality and yearning to provide each child with a well-rounded education (Banks, 2010).

An avenue where teachers can find culture to be accessible is the music classroom. The music classroom has the opportunity to explore culture through songs, choral works, instrumental selections, and listening experiences that are common and unique to specific cultures. Furthermore, multicultural music education can encourage cross-discipline study through art, dance, literature, drama, and social studies (Anderson, 1996). This can also promote collaboration between the music teacher and the other general education teachers in the school. It should be noted that ethnic diversity is not often reflected in K-12 curriculum in American



society (Anderson, 1996). However, early exposure to a variety of cultures and their music could lead to students being more receptive to all types of musical expression. This could establish a deeper appreciation that then leads to lifelong appreciation for music. The content of visuals in the music classroom may be a means by which culture can be included and represented. Instrument family posters might easily represent a more diversified realm of instruments. Also, images of people from various cultures may make a student feel included in the curriculum and the poster becomes more relatable.

### **Practical Applications**

For each of the above communities of students, teachers work to provide accessibility in the music classroom. It is the goal of every music educator to provide each student with a high-quality, well-rounded music education. This may be easily achieved through the accessibility of the visual aids found in the music classroom. The following practical applications may take into consideration any modifications and adaptations that may make the music classroom more accessible.

Most music teachers at all levels will be teaching students with disabilities. Classes such as music are typically the ones in which students with disabilities join the general education classes if in an inclusion program. It is important for students to have a large quantity and variety of resources available in the music classroom.

For students who have vision loss, there are two easy accommodations that could be in place. The first of these is Braille posters and handouts. This would allow for students with vision loss to maximize their learning experiences in the music classroom. Students who are not entirely blind but still classify as students with vision loss could benefit from a larger print.



Some students who have vision loss may be able to have large print Braille music specially printed for them so they could fully participate in every rehearsal and performance. By increasing the font size and using a simple font, students with vision loss may be able to more easily read and follow along with the class (Adamek, 2010).

Students with dyslexia or language delay may benefit from more graphics and images to supplement the text of posters. Those with dyslexia would benefit from an appropriate amount of graphics to supplement the understanding of text. Students with dysgraphia would benefit from simple images and layouts that are not cluttered. This could allow for the students to infer from images and identify musical subjects without feeling as discouraged as they may with posters heavy with text.

For most students with disabilities, including children with autism, visual aids should not be busy or overwhelming. Designs including fonts and images, that are too busy or overwhelmingly colorful, may be distracting or hard to understand for some students. This can be avoided by adhering to a few fonts across all the visual aids and limiting colors to a scheme or palate.

For students that live in poverty, resources outside of school may not readily be available. Students who live in poverty may not have access to resources due to restrictions in transportation, finances, and familial support. Fortunately, there are ways that music teachers can provide even more support and resources for students with limited access. Posters that portray a wide array of cultures could promote a dedication to diversity and unity (Jensen, 2009). Teachers may also consider creating take-home packets that are versions of the posters. This resource would be available to all students, but would provide reinforcement for the student that has no other access to music education resources at home or in their community. Another



beneficial aspect of visual aids in the classroom is that they help improve reading skills in students with limited resources (Jensen, 2009).

Considerations for students from cultures are currently in most music classrooms, but there are specific actions that may further the diversity of cultures represented in the music classroom. Culture studies could include not just music, but also art, dance, literature, drama, and social studies (Anderson, 1996). Posters could include images of people that represent a variety of cultural demographics. However, it is important that these images do not essentialize the culture's representation (Pratt, 2016). Essentializing may misrepresent the authentic values and characteristics of a culture. Culture could also influence the composers and instruments that are discussed and displayed through visual aids and curriculum choices.

### Poster Development

The formerly discussed research has led to the development of visual aids that may be more accessible for students with disabilities, students in poverty, and students from various cultures. These visual aids are less cluttered, more legible, and more practical in comparison to the posters that are currently available. The following section is organized by posters (see attachments) and will explain the content of the poster, how connections in the classroom are made, and why they are designed in such a manner.

Attachments A and B display note values (A) and rest values (B). The title is at the top of the poster in a banner, and the notes or rests are displayed in a hierarchical fashion. This can be a useful tool in the music classroom, as music teacher will refer to rhythm and value often. Both posters A and B have red border with a corresponding red banner. This color was chosen at random, but intentionally grouped rests and notes together, as they are closely related content. It



is assumed that all visuals are displayed in the classroom. A header font was chosen that is engaging and easily read. The notes and rests are presented in a hierarchical manner to show the divisions of the larger beat. This content is displayed in a portrait page orientation so that the spacing between notes is more easily read. If the page were of landscape orientation, students with dyslexia or cognitive disorders may have a more difficult time processing the information on these posters, due to the cramming of information.

Attachment C presents tempo markings. The color yellow was chosen at random for the border and banner, and a black font was chosen for the header to provide enough contrast against the yellow for legibility. The different color choice (yellow) allows for a differentiation in content from the previous posters (red). The animals represented for the tempo are reflective of how children are taught animal behaviors, including speed of travel, through books and media. The tempos are presented on a spectrum depicted by an arrow with the three tempos included the fine arts education performance standards for elementary school general music (Georgia Department of Education, 2009).

Attachment D defines the dynamic markings required for learning by the Georgia Performance Standards for Music. All of the attachments related to dynamics have a green border and banner, as to denote related content. On attachment D, there is a green triangle in the background. This is to demonstrate the range from pianissimo to fortissimo both in the lowering and rising of decibel levels and in the differences between the two extremes. I chose to lighten the green of the triangle so the contrast of the black letters would still be accessible for those children who have difficulty with sight.

Attachment E is also related to dynamics, specifically crescendo and decrescendo. Green has been chosen for the border and banner, as this poster falls in the same content group as



attachment D. The dynamics forte and piano have definitions in parentheses below as a reminder for students. Crescendo is intentionally written above the respective graphic as to not confuse the term that corresponds to the decrescendo marking.

Attachment F is a dynamic dial. The dynamic terms from attachment D are presented in a fashion that allows for an arrow to point at a specific dynamic level to demonstrate the dynamic of a piece. This allows for an interactive model of dynamics, as well as a demonstration of the wide range of dynamics. This content is also related to attachments D and E, and therefore is the same color for the label, the arrow, and the spectrum. There is extra space between the markings to allow for the demonstration of dynamic levels between.

Attachment G is about the musical staff. I chose blue for this poster as a color that had not yet been used to distinguish that this content is of a separate nature than that previously. This poster is designated for explaining bar lines, double bar lines, and measures. The simplicity of the layout of this poster makes the information easy to read, benefiting students with dyslexia, dysgraphia, vision loss, and other disabilities. The arrows help to distinguish which element of the staff should be labeled as such.

Attachment H is one that presents the content of clefs. The definitions used for this poster's terms come from Alfred Publishing Company: treble clef- for higher instruments and higher voices; bass clef- for lower instruments and lower voices (Althouse, 2003). The symbol, the term, and the definition are provided in an efficient layout to make the content clear. The poster border and banner are in blue, as this content also relates to the staff, as in attachment G. The treble clef is discussed first so as to resemble the order of staves and respective clefs seem in scores of music.

the design process was either driven by the findings of the research or is a decision made out of personal choice that has no effect on the accessibility of the visuals.



Attachment I represents time signature. I have provided the meanings of each number in a time signature, as commonly displayed on a staff in music scores. At the bottom of this poster, different time signatures are explained and defined. This poster is also in blue, the color of the staff related content for the border and title banner. This is accessible to students with disabilities, specifically dyslexia and dysgraphia because it is simplified and easy to read. This also applies to attachment J.

Attachment J, key signatures, is similar to attachment I. The border and banner color is blue to demonstrate that this poster is to be categorized with the other staff related content. The key of G major was used instead of C major because C major has no sharps or flats. The key of G major was otherwise chosen at random and could just as easily been written as F major or many other key signatures.

Additional posters could be made, and the attached are simply the beginnings of such work. Culture would be accessible in the instruments represented, including orchestral, religious, and other categories of instrument type. For students in poverty, all of these developed visuals could be printed, in color (preferred) or greyscale, and be sent home as additional student material for the students. This does not have to be limited exclusively to these students, either. This is a much more cost-efficient solution than workbooks or textbooks to be bought for each student.

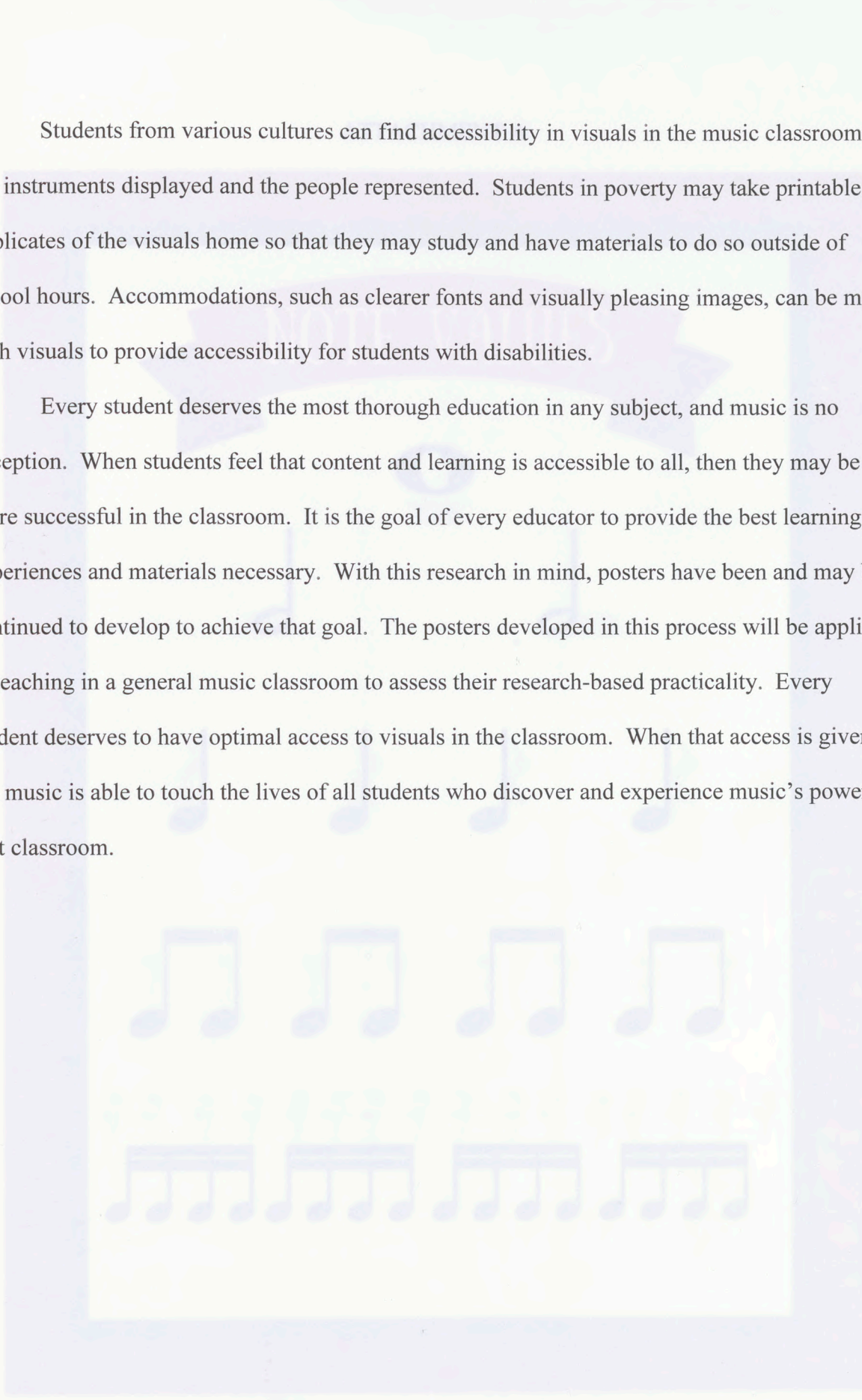
### **Conclusion**

The visuals at the conclusion of this thesis are created with the above research in mind. Each decision in the design process was either driven by the findings of the research or is a decision made out of personal choice that has no effect on the accessibility of the visuals.



Students from various cultures can find accessibility in visuals in the music classroom via the instruments displayed and the people represented. Students in poverty may take printable duplicates of the visuals home so that they may study and have materials to do so outside of school hours. Accommodations, such as clearer fonts and visually pleasing images, can be made with visuals to provide accessibility for students with disabilities.

Every student deserves the most thorough education in any subject, and music is no exception. When students feel that content and learning is accessible to all, then they may be more successful in the classroom. It is the goal of every educator to provide the best learning experiences and materials necessary. With this research in mind, posters have been and may be continued to develop to achieve that goal. The posters developed in this process will be applied to teaching in a general music classroom to assess their research-based practicality. Every student deserves to have optimal access to visuals in the classroom. When that access is given to all, music is able to touch the lives of all students who discover and experience music's power in that classroom.





ATTACHMENT A

NOTE VALUES





ATTACHMENT B

# REST VALUES

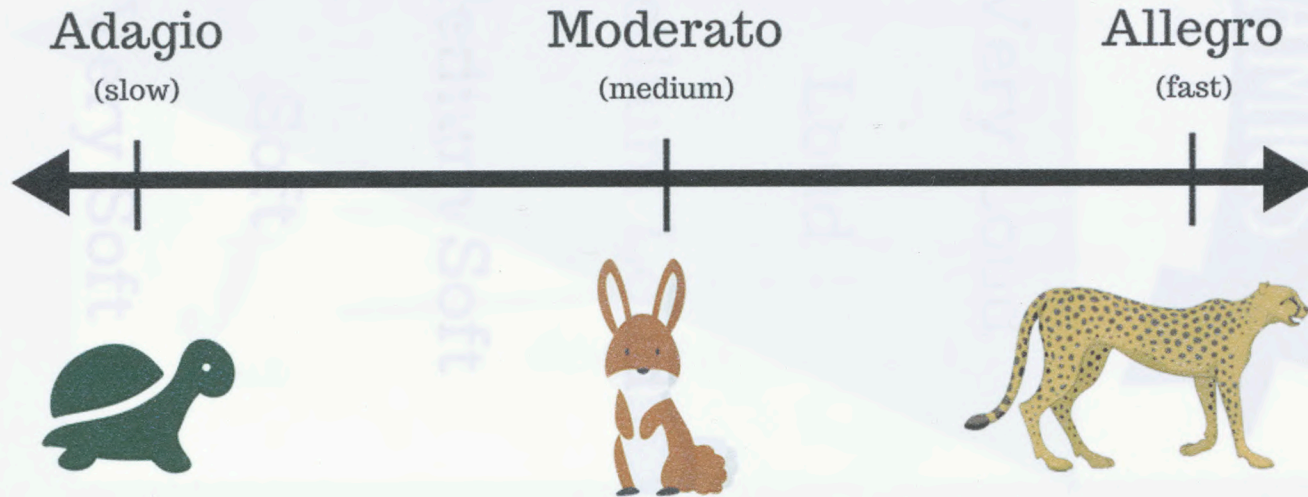
Musical notation for rest values. The notation is arranged in three rows:

- Row 1: Four stems with flags, each topped with a horizontal bar. The bars are positioned at the top of the stems, with the second and fourth bars being slightly higher than the first and third.
- Row 2: Eight stems with flags, each topped with a horizontal bar. The bars are positioned at the top of the stems.
- Row 3: A single row of 16 stems with flags, each topped with a horizontal bar. The bars are positioned at the top of the stems.



# TEMPO

Tempo can be slow, tempo can be fast,  
and tempo can be anything in between!





ATTACHMENT D

# DYNAMICS

*ff* Very Loud

*f* Loud

*mf* Medium Loud

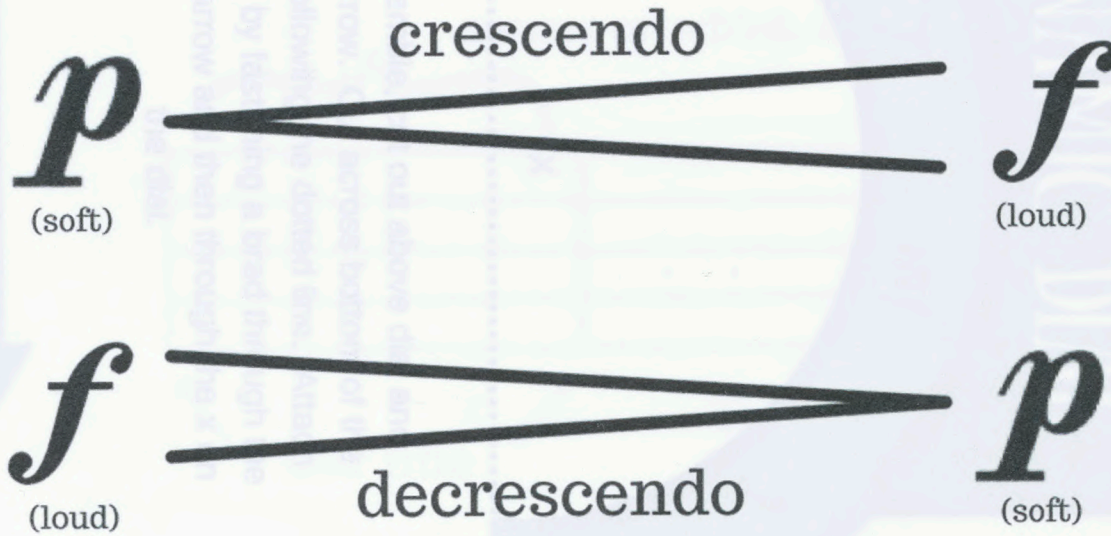
*mp* Medium Soft

*p* Soft

*pp* Very Soft

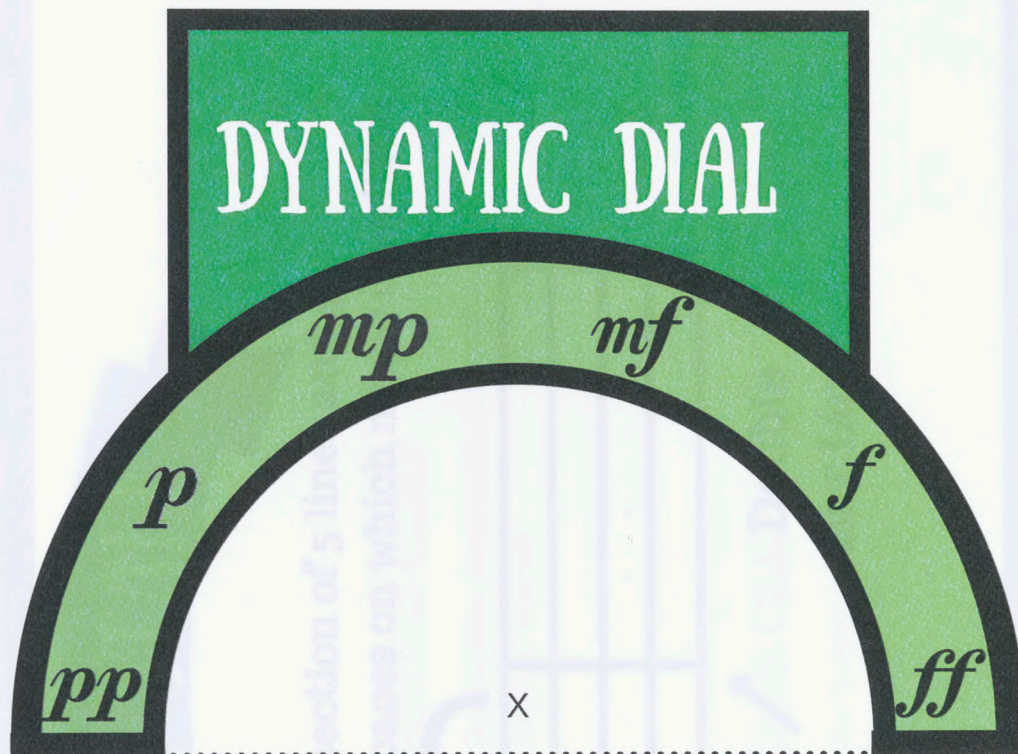


# DYNAMICS





ATTACHMENT F



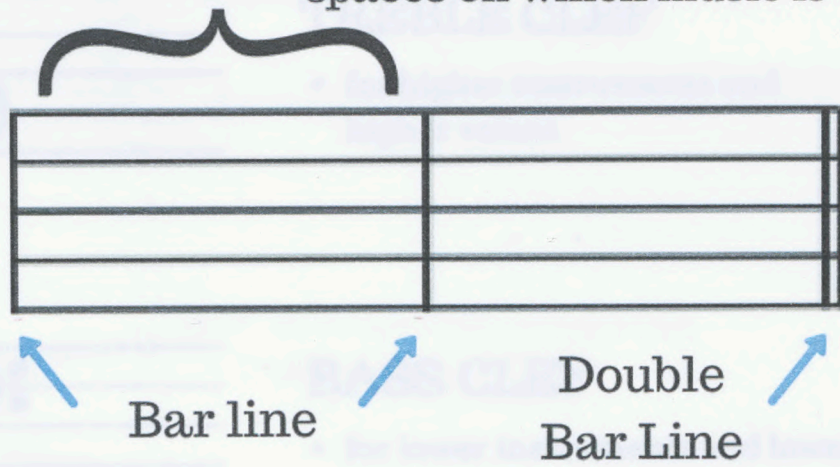
To assemble, cut out above dial and below arrow. Cut across bottom of the dial by following the dotted line. Attach the arrow by fastening a brad through the x on the arrow and then through the x on the dial.





# THE STAFF

Measure - a section of 5 lines and 4 spaces on which music is written



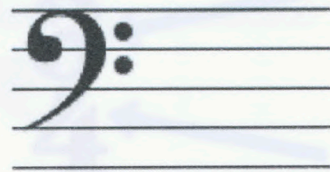


# CLEFS



## TREBLE CLEF

- for higher instruments and higher voices



## BASS CLEF

- for lower instruments and lower voices



# TIME SIGNATURE



- how many beats are in the measure



- what kind of note gets the beat

3

- there are three beats in the measure

4

- the quarter note gets the beat



## KEY SIGNATURE



The key signature is a group of sharps or flats at the beginning of a staff to establish the key.



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THE ACCESSIBILITY OF VISUALS IN THE GENERAL MUSIC CLASSROOM  
FOCUSING ON STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, STUDENTS IN POVERTY,  
AND STUDENTS FROM VARIOUS CULTURES

By

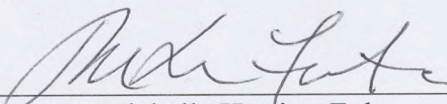
Katherine A. Holbrook

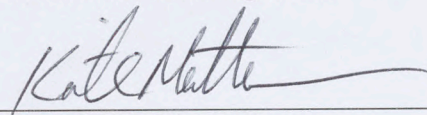
A Thesis Submitted to the

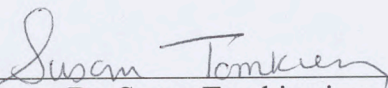
HONORS COLLEGE

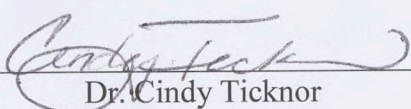
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for Honors in the Degree of

BACHELOR OF MUSIC EDUCATION  
CHORAL CONCENTRATION  
COLLEGE OF THE ARTS  
COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY

Thesis Advisor:  Date: 12/11/17  
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